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DINITZ AND WJC DELEGATION HOLD HISTORIC MEETINGS IN YUGOSLAVIA

JTA Staff Report

JERUSALEM, Aug. 31 (JTA) -- Simcha Dinitz returned here Tuesday night from a visit to Yugoslavia, the first by an Israeli official since Belgrade severed relations with the Jewish state following the Six-Day War of 1967.

Dinitz, who is chairman of the World Zionist Organization-Jewish Agency Executive, held an unprecedented meeting with the Yugoslav foreign minister. He was accompanied by Mendel Kaplan, chairman of the Jewish Agency Board of Governors, and Israel Singer, secretary-general of the World Jewish Congress, which arranged the meeting.

Dinitz, who also serves on the WJC Executive, told reporters upon his arrival here that Yugoslav Foreign Minister Budimir Loncar stressed his country's special friendship with the Israeli people and its desire to help advance practical bilateral matters and the Middle East peace process.

He added, however, that Loncar was critical of Israeli policies.

On Monday, Dinitz, Kaplan and Singer addressed delegates of the European branch of the World Union of Jewish Students, the WJC student organization, which is holding its annual conference in Yugoslavia.

The meeting, which is taking place in the Montenegro region, is the first the group has ever held in a Communist country.

Bilateral Ties Discussed

On Tuesday, the WJC delegation met in Belgrade with Loncar. Their hour-long discussion included the subject of bilateral relations between Israel and Yugoslavia, and the questions of trade, tourism and direct flights between the countries.

In New York, WJC executive director Elan Steinberg said this week's meetings follow upon talks in July 1987 between WJC President Edgar Bronfman and Yugoslav leader Lazar Mojsov.

According to Steinberg, Mojsov said at that time that "he would work toward better relations with the Jewish world as a whole and the State of Israel."

Shortly after that meeting, Tanjug, the official Yugoslavian news agency, opened an office in Jerusalem. In January 1988, the Yugoslav ambassador to the United Nations, Marko Kosin, urged closer ties with Israel in remarks at U.N. European headquarters in Geneva.

"Yugoslavia recognizes the fact that Israel should have a right to her sovereignty," he said at the time.

At Tuesday's meeting in Belgrade, Singer handed the Yugoslav foreign minister a declassified 1948 U.S. Army wanted list of 50,000 Nazi war criminals, compiled after the war. It includes the name of Kurt Waldheim, wanted for murder, Steinberg told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency.

Besides meeting with the foreign minister, the WJC delegation also conferred with representatives of the Jewish community in Belgrade. Talks focused on plans to expand Jewish education there with Jewish Agency funding and to strengthen the community's ties with Israel.

In the past five months, Dinitz has visited three other Communist countries, Romania, Poland and Hungary, and is reported to be planning to visit the Soviet Union in September. In each instance, he has come away with tangible benefits in relations between the governments of those country and Israel.

(Contributing to this report were JTA correspondent Gil Sedan in Jerusalem and JTA staff writer Susan Birnbaum in New York.)

JEWISH CULTURAL CENTER TO BE BUILT IN MOSCOW, SAY UNCONFIRMED REPORTS

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Aug. 31 (JTA) -- Plans to build a Jewish cultural center in Moscow are in the works, according to unconfirmed reports from the Soviet capital.

According to a Moscow publication called "Soviet Jewry," a delegation headed by Edgar Bronfman and Simcha Dinitz is expected in Moscow sometime in the next few weeks, in connection with establishment of a Jewish cultural center there.

Bronfman is president of the World Jewish Congress. Dinitz, who is chairman of the World Zionist Organization-Jewish Agency Executive, just returned from a trip to Yugoslavia. (See related story.)

The Moscow publication, which Soviet Jewry activists in the United States have never heard of, was cited in a Copenhagen dispatch published Wednesday in the Israeli daily newspaper Haaretz.

The Jewish cultural center would be the first of its kind in the Soviet Union since World War II, according to one former refusenik.

According to the Moscow magazine, construction of a center would cost millions of dollars, a sum Moscow Jews hope could be picked up by Western Jewish communities.

The magazine also reports that the visit of Bronfman and Dinitz will take place prior to Simchat Torah. On that holiday, thousands of Jews converge in front of Moscow's main synagogue, the Choral Synagogue on Archipova Street.

Meetings With Shevardnadze

In New York, WJC executive director Elan Steinberg confirmed that there would be "follow-up to discussions" Bronfman had with Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze last May in Moscow. But he added that "at the moment, it would serve no purpose to go into specifics."

Gregory Rosenztein, a former refusenik who left the Soviet Union six weeks ago and is now living in an absorption center in Jerusalem, expressed misgivings about the center.

Speaking to the Jewish Telegraphic Agency while visiting New York, he said he was "not so happy" the center would be under the authority of Rabbi Arthur Shayevech.

Shayevech, who is chief rabbi of Moscow, is not highly regarded by Soviet Jewish activists, who cite his government employment and criticize deficiencies in his Jewish knowledge and his lack of involvement with them as a trusted colleague. Among refuseniks, he is largely shunned.

(JTA staff writer Susan Birnbaum in New York contributed to this report.)

KOCH AND JACKSON PASS PEACE PIPE, AGREE TO PURSUE 'COMMON GROUND'

By Andrew Silow Carroll

NEW YORK, Aug. 31 (JTA) — New York City Mayor Edward Koch and the Rev. Jesse Jackson shook hands briefly after a two-hour meeting Wednesday, and agreed to pursue a "common agenda" that would include attacking urban problems and getting out the vote for Democratic presidential nominee Michael Dukakis.

"The grandsons and granddaughters of slaves and the sons and daughters of the Holocaust must sit down and find common ground," Jackson said at a news conference following the meeting.

Both sought to deflect attention from events in April, when tensions flared during the New York Democratic primary following remarks by Koch, who said Jews and other supporters of Israel would have to be "crazy" to vote for Jackson, and that Jackson had lied about his participation in the events following the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

The news conference was held at New York Gov. Mario Cuomo's Manhattan office at 2 World Trade Center. Cuomo said the meeting, initiated by Koch, "was not an attempt to go back into history, to April 1988, or forward into April 1989."

Jackson and Koch did agree, according to Cuomo, that it was "important when we do come to differ that we concentrate on judgments or policy rather than on people's integrity."

Cuomo spoke first, followed by Koch, then Jackson.

Koch's remarks in April stung the city's black community, and at Wednesday's meeting Jackson mentioned them in the same breath as other recent racially divisive events in New York City.

In particular, he mentioned the death of a black man at the hands of a white gang in Howard Beach, and the ongoing defiance by the Yonker's City Council of a federal judge's order to agree to a desegregation plan for the suburb.

No Apology

But Jackson said he neither sought nor received an apology from Koch for the remarks. "I bear no animosity in my heart toward anyone," he said.

Koch said that apologies "were not the purpose of this meeting. The purpose was to forge ahead, not to look backward."

Koch said that in months past, he had already apologized for the stridency, if not the substance, of his remarks.

Those accompanying Jackson at the closed meeting were Manhattan Borough President David Dinkins, Rep. Charles Rangel (D-N.Y.), labor leader Stanley Hill and Jackson's son Jonathan. Koch was accompanied by businessman Peter Strauss, who is Jewish.

Black leaders and the city's black-run newspapers objected when the meeting was announced earlier this month.

Those opposing Koch in next April's Democratic primary for mayor felt a reconciliation between Koch and Jackson would thwart their attempts to launch a "Stop Koch" campaign.

Jackson countered those complaints by saying Wednesday's meeting was about launching a massive voter registration drive with Koch's help, in order to help elect Dukakis as president in November.

The meeting, he said afterwards, included a discussion of that issue and the need to address urban problems such as drug abuse, racial discrimination and fair housing.

"I believe in a 'let's talk' policy," said Jackson.

But Jackson did criticize Koch in the days before the meeting, saying the mayor had abused the power of his office in launching the April attacks.

While the focus of the meeting was party harmony, outside the office building, about 15 members of Jews Against Jackson demonstrated while carrying signs reading "Welcome to Hymietown" and "Hymies for Bush."

The signs were a reference to a remark made by Jackson about the city during his bid for the Democratic presidential nomination in 1984.

VIOLENCE ERUPTS IN TERRITORIES, AS A GENERAL STRIKE CONTINUES

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Aug. 31 (JTA) — Violence erupted in the territories Wednesday, as local residents staged a general strike for the second consecutive day.

The strike halted public transportation, making it impossible for many laborers in the territories to report for work in Israel proper.

Two Arabs died in clashes with the army, according to reports by Arab sources. The sources said the violence began early Wednesday, when Israel Defense Force soldiers raided the West Bank village of Beit Rima, near Ramallah.

The Arab sources claimed that some 15 residents were arrested.

The army then moved on to the nearby village of Deir Ghassana, where residents attacked the soldiers with stones, bottles and bricks. The army fired, killing Fathi el-Barghouti, 22. Five others were wounded.

A spokesperson for the IDF said he could not confirm the incident.

Three firebombs were hurled at a border police patrol in the village of Azarya, east of Jerusalem. Security forces searched the area and found two more firebombs on the roof of a local school building.

Violence also flared Wednesday afternoon in the West Bank town of Kalkilya. Youngsters pelted Israeli soldiers and cars with stones. The army responded with rubber bullets. One Arab was reportedly injured.

In the Gaza Strip, violence erupted in the Shabura neighborhood of Rafah, as residents violated the curfew there. The army fired tear gas and rubber bullets, injuring one rioter.

Meanwhile, a 16-year-old resident of Gaza died of his wounds at the Tel Hashomer hospital in Ramat Gan. Eiman Ahmad a-Najab was wounded in a clash Tuesday with IDF troops. Arab sources charged he was severely beaten, but the army spokesman in Gaza could not confirm the death.

Quiet tension prevailed over Nablus, following violent demonstrations Tuesday night.

SLA THWARTS TERRORIST INFILTRATORS

TEL AVIV, Aug. 31 (JTA) — Two terrorists planning to infiltrate Israel and attack civilian targets in Galilee were captured alive Tuesday by soldiers of the Israeli-backed South Lebanon Army. The gunmen were believed to be members of the Syrian-backed Popular Struggle Front.

RED CROSS ADMITS FAILING TO SAVE JEWS DURING WAR By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Aug. 31 (JTA) -- The International Committee of the Red Cross has admitted, in a special communication to the Jerusalem Post, that it could have saved more Jews from the Nazis.

The statement, published in Wednesday's edition of the Post, was issued Tuesday in Geneva and signed by its director general, Jacques Moreillon.

It was released especially for publication in the Post in response to a report by the Israeli daily's London correspondent, David Horowitz, published last Sunday under the headline "Red Cross knew in '42 of massacre of Jews, but kept silent."

The ICRC admits for the first time that it could probably have saved more Jewish lives than it did, particularly in countries where the Nazis did not maintain total control, such as Hungary and Romania.

The Post reported that the ICRC itself hired Swiss Professor Jean-Claude Favez to investigate the matter. Following a six-year study of 350,000 Red Cross documents, Favez wrote, "The ICRC knew what was happening -- that is quite clear. (But) it did not dare confront the Germans."

The ICRC's failure to inspect Nazi concentration camps has been reported before, including one inspection for which the Nazis propped up a false front at Theresienstadt, in Czechoslovakia.

The camp was presented as having healthful conditions, and the Red Cross fulfilled the Nazi illusion by only visiting the camp's orchestra and carefully prepared children's facilities.

Moreover, vans used by the Nazis for the mobile extermination of Jews were painted with a red cross on the side, thereby leading people to believe that the vans were actually Red Cross vehicles.

Favez has written a book on the subject of the ICRC's failure, titled "Silent Witness," and has appeared in a BBC documentary on the subject seen in England.

Conclusion Challenged

However, Favez' conclusion was challenged by Moreillon, who hired him, prior to the publication in the Post of the first article. At the time, Moreillon had said he did not believe an appeal would have helped Jews.

The Simon Wiesenthal Center in Los Angeles criticized Moreillon for defending the Red Cross in the BBC documentary.

But Tuesday's ICRC statement, titled "First Lessons Drawn by the ICRC," admits for the first time that it could probably have saved more Jews.

"In those countries, the ICRC today feels that it did not seek out, at that time, all the possible ways and means of protecting more of the victims," Moreillon wrote.

However, Moreillon refrained from unconditional apology by saying that in October 1942, the Red Cross had "mostly indirect and incomplete information regarding the fate of the Jews in Europe and was not conscious of Hitler's systematic plan to kill all the Jews."

But the ICRC also takes blame for not having asserted itself more in its contacts with the Allied and neutral powers, singling out the United States and Britain.

"The ICRC could no doubt have shown more

imagination and greater firmness in order to persuade the Allies -- especially the U.S. and Great Britain -- and the neutral countries, to combat the policy of genocide and -- particularly with regard to Switzerland -- to relax their policies towards refugees, the Jews in particular, for whom admittance by neutral countries and by the Allies represented the only chance of survival," the statement says.

Did Not Do Enough

On Wednesday, Moreillon told Swiss radio that the ICRC "did not do enough to save the Romanian and Hungarian Jews during World War II, but could not do more in favor of the Polish and Russian Jews under Nazi occupation."

Moreillon also said that "restricted documents" concerning activities of the organization during World War II will be made available in the future to non-Swiss researchers.

"We made an exception and gave access to the documents to Arieh Ben-Tov, a Tel Aviv researcher," Moreillon said.

The Red Cross's failure to save Jews has been compounded in recent years by the organization's decision to ally itself with its Moslem counterpart, the Red Crescent Society, and to pointedly evade any union with its Israeli counterpart, The Magen David Adom, even going so far as to change its name in 1986 to the International Movement of the Red Cross and Red Crescent.

This move has been protested by the World Jewish Congress, which held a meeting in New York last week with the president of the American Red Cross, Richard Schubert, who promised to do all he could to assist in a worldwide campaign to bring the Magen David Adom into the fold.

(JTA correspondent Tamar Levy in Geneva and JTA staff writer Susan Birnbaum in New York contributed to this report.)

PLO LEADER URGES WORLD BOYCOTT OF ISRAEL IN WAKE OF UPRISING

By Tamar Levy

GENEVA, Aug. 31 (JTA) -- Farouk Kaddoumi, head of the Palestine Liberation Organization's political department, called Wednesday on the international community to boycott Israel.

Addressing a conference of non-governmental organizations meeting at the United Nations headquarters here on the issue of Palestine, the PLO official charged that both major political parties in Israel, the Likud and Labor, do not intend to return to the Palestinians the territories captured in the Six-Day War of 1967.

Kaddoumi said that while the political platform of the Likud bloc states that Israel should annex the territories, the Labor Alignment's platform says the Jordan River should be established as the permanent border of Israel in any settlement with Jordan.

In view of the uprising in the territories and Israel's treatment of Palestinians there, the international community "should find ways and means to protect the population of the occupied territories," the PLO official said.

He said that the imposition of sanctions against Israel by the international community would serve as a warning to Israel "to stop its criminal practices."

Israel continued to be the target of sharp condemnations by various speakers at the NGO conference here Tuesday and Wednesday.

PAT ROBERTSON AIDE NAMED REAGAN'S JEWISH LIAISON

By Howard Rosenberg

WASHINGTON, Aug. 31 (JTA) — Benjamin Waldman, who served as assistant press secretary to the Rev. Pat Robertson during his unsuccessful 1988 presidential bid, will be starting Thursday as President Reagan's new liaison to the Jewish community, the Jewish Telegraphic Agency learned Wednesday.

Waldman, who will assume the formal title of White House associate director for public liaison, told JTA Wednesday that his goals include providing Jews an "entry point for issues that are important to them."

Waldman said he will also work on other areas such as child care, housing, foreign policy toward South Africa and the Strategic Defense Initiative.

"The main goal is to help provide continuity" between the Reagan administration and a future one. He said it is "possible" that he could end up staying on if Vice President George Bush is elected president.

Waldman was preceded by Matt Zachari, who served as interim acting liaison after Max Green stepped down from the post in late June.

Waldman's last post was special assistant to the administrator of the General Services Administration. He also worked at the Department of Housing and Urban Development and as associate director of personnel at the White House in 1986, before he joined the Robertson campaign.

His wife, Rebecca, said he kept kosher on the campaign trail with Robertson by "eating a lot of vegetables."

She said her husband considers himself less an Orthodox Jew than a "strong Conservative."

Waldman, who will be 30 years old Sept. 4, has two children: a son, Zachary, 2, and a daughter, Kendall, 10 months.

A native of Claremont, Calif., Waldman earned a master's degree in government from Claremont Graduate School, after receiving an undergraduate degree from Claremont Men's College.

He was active in the B'nai B'rith Youth Organization and later the Jewish Community Relations Council of Los Angeles.

Addresses Evangelicals

He was interviewed by The Atlanta Jewish Times March 4 after an appearance before 3,000 evangelical Christians in Atlanta's Civic Center. In that address, he made mention of his Jewish roots, and recalled Wednesday that he must have given at least 30 similar speeches to evangelical groups.

The Atlanta weekly asked Waldman if he feels Jews are becoming more accepting of religion in the public domain.

"I think that the liberal Jewish organizations in America are being less and less tolerant of religion in the public sphere," he said. "I think they are probably going too far in trying to eliminate any public affirmation of faith in God for anybody in the public arena or public sphere."

Waldman also criticized those who feared Reagan, and later Robertson, was going to make the United States a Christian nation. "None of it came true for Reagan, and it's not going to come true with Pat," he told the Atlanta paper.

Deflecting criticism of Robertson for opposing abortion publicly on the campaign trail,

Waldman took a swipe at some fellow Republican contenders, saying maybe Robertson might not do so "if he is a George Bush or Bob Dole type of candidate."

But Waldman said he would have no trouble working for Bush, saying he is "very supportive" of the Republican presidential nominee.

David Harris, Washington representative of the American Jewish Committee, said, "I don't know anything about him except what little I've read about his relationship to Pat Robertson."

'Highly Qualified'

Jacob Stein, Reagan's first liaison to the Jewish community and a former chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, said, "Ben is a highly qualified person who is very knowledgeable, and he will further the effort of the administration to establish a close and working relationship with the Jewish community."

Stein said he has known Waldman for many years. "He was active in Washington Jewish events," Stein said.

Chris Gersten, executive director of the National Jewish Coalition, a Republican group, said Waldman headed the 1984 Jewish effort on Reagan's behalf. He noted that Waldman worked out of the Reagan-Bush headquarters, since the coalition was not founded until 1985.

Gersten said Waldman "did an excellent job by most counts under difficult circumstances," specifically citing Waldman's attempts to diffuse the warm embrace of the evangelical right at a prayer breakfast during the 1984 Republican Party Convention in Dallas.

"A lot of people's sights were set on seeing that the Jewish community does not support the Republicans," Gersten said.

At the breakfast, New Testament Bibles were distributed and speakers praised Jesus.

60 U.S. TEEN-AGERS ARRIVE IN ISRAEL

By Cathrine Gerson

JERUSALEM, Aug. 31 (JTA) — The largest group of American teen-agers ever to participate in a single Youth Aliyah program arrived in Israel on Monday night for a year of study.

The group of 60 youngsters, ranging in age from 15 to 17, will undertake an intensive study program. They will live in Youth Aliyah villages throughout Israel and will study Hebrew and Jewish and Israeli history. They also will tour the country extensively.

At the end of the year, the American youth will be eligible to receive a year's academic credit in their home school systems.

Members of the group said upon their arrival that they are not concerned about being in Israel in the midst of the Palestinian unrest in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

John Hakimi of New York said that he was not sure about the situation in the West Bank, but he did not feel he had anything to worry about in the Haifa area, where he will be staying.

Sandra Harrison of San Diego said Israel is very exciting because "everything is so different and special here."

There will be no JTA Daily News Bulletin on Monday, Sept. 5, because of the Labor Day postal holiday in the United States.